School Announcements:

ONE QUESTION A DAY

. . . to promote responsibility

Free eBook

School Announcements:

One Question a Day

to promote responsibility

Free eBook

PiperPress.com

Copyright

Published by Piper Press

P.O. Box 2227
Los Alamitos, California 90720
U.S.A.

Copyright © 2016 by Marvin Marshall

Contact **Piper Press** for other publications.
PiperPress.com
mailto:Order@PiperPress.com

Contact **Marvin Marshall** for training and keynotes.
MarvinMarshall.com
714.334.1882 Pacific Time Zone
mailto:Marv@MarvinMarshall.com

Discipline without Stress® is a registered trademark belonging to
Marvin L. Marshall
DISCIPLINE WITHOUT STRESS®

Permission

Permission is granted to repost or reprint this publication in whole or in part as long as *Marvin Marshall* is cited.

ISBN: 978-0-9848999-7-5
Free download

Cover: Rommel Johnson & Darlene Swanson
Interior Designer: Dawn Josephson

Contents

Acknowledgments	4
About Piper Press	4
The Problem	5
Preface	5
Introduction	5
Promoting Social Responsibility: One Question a Day	6
The Hierarchy of Social Development	11
Publisher's Notes	13
References	17
Additional Resources	17
The Discipline Without Stress Teaching Model	

Acknowledgments

Kerry Weisner, a teacher in British Columbia, Canada, is responsible for taking the totally noncoercive (but never permissive) *Discipline Without Stress*® behavior program to a higher level. She used the *Hierarchy of Social Development* to have students WANT to put forth effort in their own learning—not simply to get a good grade or please someone else but rather because to do so is always in a student's own best self-interest.

Kerry taught all age levels and used the *hierarchy* as a tool with which to explain the power of *internal motivation*. She taught that choosing to operate from a place of *internal* motivation would always create more satisfaction and joy than simply conforming to *external* motivational approaches, which typically aim at obedience and often employ manipulative approaches such as rewarding to control, bribe or influence.

Kerry first wrote about her approach in the March 2004 PHI DELTA KAPPAN cover article, *"Using a Discipline System to Promote Learning."* The article is available from the first link at:
http://marvinmarshall.com/discipline-teaching-and-parenting-support-resources/

Note: Distribution of the PHI DELTA KAPPAN article to the school staff is the only requirement to receive free books and materials.

==========

About Piper Press

Piper Press specializes in publications on how to reduce stress, increase effectiveness, and improve relationships.

SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS PROMOTE RESPONSIBILITY WITH *"ONE QUESTION A DAY"*

THE PROBLEM

Many schools and teachers are facing increased stress and poor relationships primarily because they rely on coercion to exercise authority. When people in leadership positions use *authority without coercion,* their stress is reduced and they become significantly more effective. Society has changed *and so have young people*. Using coercive approaches with the younger generation of today has a different effect than with former generations where obedience was a natural adult-child relationship.

This publication shares a simple approach that increases the likelihood that young people will choose to do what adults desire. The program prompts *internal motivation* rather than obedience, which simply does not engender desire.

PREFACE

Question of the Day is a program of great power and potential for promoting both personal and social responsibility. It can be tailored to any particular age group or school. Each day a "Question" is announced over the school's public address system. Because the announcement originates from the front office of the school, the *Question of the Day* comes across as quite formal and important. As a result, everyone in the school—students and staff alike—tend to pay attention to what is being said. In the classroom where students have heard the *Question of the Day,* there is a natural tendency to reflect on the question that has been posed.

INTRODUCTION

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) previously published portions of the article, "One Question a Day," in *Educational Leadership (May 2009).*

In order to share this ***timeless*** and **significant approach for promoting responsible character developmen**t, actual names, specific dates, and locations have been eliminated.

Promoting Social Responsibility: One Question a Day

—By Kerry Weisner

Each morning, after the more standard school announcements such as reminders of hot lunch dates and upcoming team practices, students listen with interest to find out what topic will be highlighted as the *Question of the Day.* This successful program was first created in the mood of experimentation. Prompted by the study of Marvin Marshall's three teaching principles to practice—*Positivity*, *Choice* and *Reflection*—our teachers decided to find out if what the author promised was true. Could we more effectively deal with issues of social responsibility simply by changing our teaching habits? By focusing on the *positive*, by proactively making social responsibility an attractive *choice*, and by deliberately training ourselves to do more *asking* than telling, could we interest students in becoming more socially responsible? It certainly seemed worthwhile to try.

For a year prior to the implementation of our *Question of the Day*, we tried another approach. In the first experiment, we concluded the daily morning announcements with a short *statement* or simple *request* in hopes of encouraging students to take responsibility in the classroom and out on the playground:

- "Please wipe your feet when you come in today,"
- "Always treat your friends nicely," or
- "Don't forget to wash your hands before you eat."

These typify the motivational slogans we broadcasted across the school. Although all good suggestions, students didn't seem very interested in listening to our advice. Their faces and lack of attention to our "Announcement *Statements*" revealed their inner thoughts: "Ho-hum!"

We made a decision to switch things up. Instead of *telling* students what to do, we began to *ask* them to think for themselves. We started to conclude our morning announcements with a *question* rather than a statement. When announcement *statements* became announcement *questions*, we noticed that the students began to pay attention. We could see it in their body language, in their faces and by the fact that across the school, hands spontaneously started rising to share thoughts connected to our *Question of the Day.* We knew we were onto something.

Guided by yet another understanding—gained from Marshall's book, *Discipline without Stress, Punishments or Rewards*—that "emotions drive attention and attention drives learning"—we deliberately began to *pose*

questions in a way that would engage the emotions of our students. Although a simple question such as "What are some things you can do today to be a caring person?" was more effective in gaining attention than a short statement reminding students to be friendly, we noticed that a question*, preceded with information or an anecdote*, provided an emotional hook that was even more compelling.

> Yesterday at recess a student accidentally fell while playing and badly scraped both knees on the pavement. Immediately, a large group of children of all ages gathered around offering encouragement and support. One student ran to get the duty teacher. Someone else offered to take the injured person inside to clean up and many others asked, "Are you okay?"
>
> Although it might seem like a little thing to help someone on the playground, in the long run it's little things like this that make our school a caring place.
>
> *Can you think of a time when someone showed caring for you at our school*?

Enlightened by an insight gained from Canadian developmental child psychologist, Dr. Gordon Neufeld, and supported by Stephen Covey's assertion in his well-known *"Seven Habits of Highly Effective People"* approach that personal victories precede public ones, we understood it was important that the majority of our "Questions" guide students to consider issues of *personal* responsibility. Although our long-range goal was the development of *social* responsibility, we knew we couldn't put the cart before the horse. We couldn't expect elementary school students—particularly younger ones—to develop the more sophisticated habits of acting responsibly within social settings without encouraging them first to develop foundational character habits of personal responsibility.

We understood that if we could help students became more *personally* responsible, social responsibility would almost take care of itself. It made sense. The development of a strong sense of personal responsibility within an individual *naturally leads to a strong internal desire* to act in *socially* responsible ways. Personally responsible people *want* to be socially responsible; to be otherwise creates a sense of inner dissonance that is

difficult to ignore or tolerate. It's not typically necessary to police such people or expend much effort to convince them to do right.

Excited, we began to build a bank of "Announcement Questions" that could be repeated year after year. *(Published separately)*

This afternoon we will be meeting in teams to go on a special tour of the school. The goal of the tour is to give everyone a chance to learn the procedures of our school.

The teachers think it's important that all students in the school know what's expected in various areas such as the playground, the bus line and the hallways.

Why will it be important to listen carefully while on the tour?

Today each class will have photographs taken. There's always some waiting time involved as everyone stands in line for a turn.

Anyone watching can easily spot the mature students at a time like this. Mature students are the ones who are able to handle "waiting time" well. They don't need adults to baby-sit them every moment; they are in charge of their own behavior.

What does it be like if someone your age waits with maturity?

This evening we have parent-teacher interviews at our school. Two things that parents and teachers usually talk about are work habits and behavior.

Your parents may want to know:
- How well you pay attention to lessons,
- Whether or not you are organized, and
- How well you manage yourself on the playground.

Here's an important question:
How does your teacher know what to say about you?

Wanting to keep our program current, each year we interspersed the more "Frequently Asked Questions" with fresh topics, often related to special events or school projects that arose specifically in that year.

Today voters are choosing a new government. Since our school gym is being used as a polling station, all day long we will see people coming to vote. We are seeing democracy in action!

In a democracy, voting is both a right and a responsibility.

Why do you think the people coming to our school today believe it is important to vote?

It wasn't long before we noticed that our "Questions" provided an opportunity to draw student attention, en masse, to issues that adults in the school felt were problematic. Well aware, however, that whatever we chose to focus upon would naturally tend to increase, we knew it was critical to remain positive—especially when presenting situations that were inherently negative. We took great care to word our "Questions" in ways that dignified students, conveyed high expectations and encouraged them to voluntarily seek responsible solutions.

Inside our schoolyard, there is one area where students are asked *not* to go for safety reasons.

Were you thinking of the parking lot? Despite the fact that everyone would agree that playing near cars is never safe, there are a number of students who keep playing in the parking lot.

Smart people think for themselves. Instead of blindly following someone who isn't making a wise choice, smart people choose to take care of themselves.

What would you do or say if someone started to lead you out to play in the parking lot?

By being both *positive* and *proactive* with our daily "Questions," we found that we could set students up to experience success in situations in which previously we had witnessed problems.

This week we're all looking forward to our annual Book Fair. Everyone enjoys the chance to look at all the brand new books set out on the tables. It's just like a store.

Well, in fact it *is* a store, so when we go into the library this week, we need to use the same kind of manners that we would expect to use in a bookstore.

What's the best way to handle a book that you'd like to look at but might not actually buy?

"Questions" to prompt reflection and/or discussion about various character traits seemed like logical additions to the program. Sometimes simple quotes were featured.

Have you ever had a time when you tried to learn a new skill and found yourself challenged? In other words, whatever it was that you wanted to learn was a bit difficult for you; you needed *perseverance* to succeed.

For some people learning to spell correctly is a challenge. For others, learning math facts is a challenge and still others find that learning to shoot a basketball through the hoop or play the recorder is a challenge.

Today we have a quote that might encourage anyone who is facing a learning challenge: "All things are difficult before they are easy."

What is this trying to tell us?

As we started to experiment in the classroom with Marshall's approach for promoting responsibility, we began to see great potential in using the language and concepts presented in his *Levels of Development* to further increase the motivational impact of our daily announcement questions.

THE HIERARCHY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Level D – Democracy: Democracy and responsibility are inseparable. *(Highest level)*

- Develops self-discipline
- Demonstrates initiative
- Displays responsibility

Level D MOTIVATION is INTERNAL.

At this level the person does the right thing simply because it is the right thing to do. In so doing, they are "rewarded" with a powerful inner sense of satisfaction that comes from being responsible.

Level C – Cooperation/Conformity

- Considerate
- Complies
- Conforms to peer pressure

Level C MOTIVATION is EXTERNAL.

At this level the person conforms to what is expected, but the motivation is to please someone else, receive some external reward or avoid punishment.

NOTE: Only Levels C and D are acceptable levels.

Level B *BEHAVIOR*– Bossing/Bullying *(Always unacceptable)*

- Bothers others
- Bullies others
- Breaks laws and makes own rules and standards

Must be bossed to behave.

At this level (and the level below), the person can expect that someone in authority will take charge.

Level A *BEHAVIOR* – Anarchy *(Always unacceptable)*

- Absence of order
- Aimless and chaotic
- Absence of government

Anarchy is the fundamental enemy of civilization.

PUBLISHER'S NOTES:

(1) The "Hierarchy of Development" has been tried using different vocabulary terms. However, every time different terms have been substituted, the understanding and power between the ***motivation*** *(****levels*** *C and D) and* ***behavior*** *(****levels*** *B and A) were lost.*

*(2) The term "bully" is never used. However, the verbal form (bully****ing****)* ***is*** *used to indicate that a person is making a choice to bully—an unacceptable level.*

(3) Some people may think that students would be confused because the letters (D, C, B, A) are used in the reverse order than in grading. Two points here: (a) Students do not confuse grading with levels of development, and (b) Children as young as four-year-olds understand the difference between what is acceptable and what is not acceptable.

(4) The reason that the levels can be used in any subject area and in any grade is that the ***examples students create*** *in their class(es) make the levels personal and powerful.*

(5) Using a Butterfly Analogy to Explain the Hierarchy

(6) The hierarchy as it applies to different subject fields

Ancillary note*: When the levels are used in disciplinary or behavior situations, counterwill is avoided. This* ***natural desire to self-defend is completely by-passed*** *because students refer to a level outside of themselves. The approach totally eliminates confrontations.*

Recognizing that adults are often inspired to action by true stories of individuals who operate from the level of internal motivation, we felt sure that young people would be similarly affected. We started to write "Questions" interwoven with acknowledgements. We described both individual students in our school and groups of students who demonstrated moments of *Level D—internal motivation* by taking the *initiative* to do what was right simply because it was the right thing to do.

Before Christmas, our school made an effort to help people who aren't as fortunate as us. We raised money to send to students in Africa and we collected pennies to buy gifts for children who live in our own town.

Even though these projects are now officially over, one little Kindergarten girl in our school is still thinking about helping others. This week she brought in a small plastic bag of her own money—about $4.00—and asked her teacher to give it to some poor people. The teacher took the money to the food bank where it was gratefully received; there are people in our town who don't have money to buy enough food.

We would say that this little girl is *internally* motivated to help others.

What does this mean?

Today we share a story about some grade six students in our school who solved a problem all on their own.

You may remember a few weeks ago there were some concerns about rough play on the playground. Some behavior was less than acceptable—*Level B.* The teachers were beginning to wonder if they would need to step in and take control.

Instead they were pleasantly surprised. The players showed initiative; they asked to solve the problem themselves. Here's what they did: They held a meeting and came up with a set of rules that everyone agreed were fair and that would keep all players safe. We're happy to report that their solution is working!

What level is it when people take the initiative to solve problems on their own?

Seeing the eagerness of students as they responded to our *Question of the Day* spurred us on. Could we use our "Questions" to motivate children to act from the *highest level, D*—the level from which action is prompted by a genuine *internal* desire to do what is right or good without the promise of an *external* reward? We decided to find out.

For many years our school had participated in a program to recycle old telephone books. As many schools do, we encouraged our students to do well in such campaigns by setting up class vs. class competitions offering pizza parties as attractive prizes to urge them on. Although collection numbers were high, as we *studied The Hierarchy of Social Development*, we started to feel rather uncomfortable with our motivational methods. Although the level of *external motivation (Level C*) was acceptable, it was clearly *not* the highest level of human social development. Inside ourselves we began to notice a certain troubling sense of dissonance: As teachers, didn't we have a responsibility to encourage young people to aim for the *highest* level—not second best? We moved in a direction that would be more in line with a school hoping to *promote internal motivation.*

Once again looking to models of mature adult behavior for guidance, we began pointing out to students what we called "the real reasons for doing things." Instead of focusing on pepperoni pizza and the boisterous rah-rah attitude required to "beat the class next door," we adopted a quieter, respectful approach. We explained—using age appropriate wording, and aided by a few charts, graphs and morning "Questions"—that by collecting and recycling phone books, individuals could make a difference in the world; they could do something to help protect the Earth and its resources. Then, as leaders in any cause would do, we enthusiastically asked students for support:

> Today is the start of our drive to collect old phone books. Do you know why we do this? Here is a fact found on the Internet: For every 36 phone books that we recycle, we save one 7-foot tree from being cut down.
>
> Here is an opportunity to show some initiative. *How many people do you know who might have a phone book you could recycle?*

All year long at our school, we show concern for the Earth. We wash out plastics and tin cans. We put food scraps into a compost bin. We pick up litter around our playground and we recycle paper and drink containers.

Now, for one month, we are also adding phone books to our recycling list. Everyone wonders how many trees we will save this year and whether we will be able to beat our old record!

How is recycling phone books connected to taking care of our Earth?

Not surprisingly—when you consider that youth is often characterized as a time of life when idealism, optimism and enthusiasm are strongest—our phone book collection numbers, first matched, and then consistently exceeded the numbers achieved during the years when we assumed it was necessary to dangle pizza as an incentive. *In the long run, an inner sense of pride and satisfaction is far more rewarding than the momentary pleasure of a slice of pizza.* To deny our youth opportunities to reach for the highest level—that which is motivated *internally*—is to underestimate their capacity to be fully human.

By asking *One Question A Day*, we joyously discovered that in the same way that adults can be encouraged to contribute to society or can feel excited by the thought of consciously making decisions that are personally and socially responsible, so too can young people be inspired to act with personal integrity and social responsibility.

REFERENCES:

Covey, Stephen (1989). *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change*. Toronto: Simon & Schuster.

Marshall, Marvin (2007). *Discipline without Stress, Punishments or Rewards: How Teachers and Parents Promote Responsibility & Learning.* (2nd Edition) Los Alamitos, CA: Piper Press.

Neufeld, Gordon and Gabor Mate (2006). *Hold on to Your Kids: Why Parents Need to Matter More than Peers.* Toronto: Alfred A. Knopf.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

BENEFITS

DISCIPLINE WITHOUT STRESS TRAINING ONLINE

IN-HOUSE STAFF DEVELOPMENT FOR SCHOOLS

ADDITIONAL PUBLICATIONS FOR SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS

CHARITY FOR SCHOOLS